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ABSTRACT

This brief paper summarizes statistics on the rate at which 16-24 year old full-time college students were employed during October from 1970 to 1993, categorized by race/ethnicity (White, Black, and Hispanic) and hours worked per week. The data indicated that 46 percent of all full-time students were employed in 1993, and about one-fourth worked at least 20 hours per week. The percentage of employed full-time students rose from 30 percent in 1970 to 47 percent in 1988, and has remained fairly stable. White students were more likely to be employed than Black students. Students from high-income families were less likely to be employed or to work as many as 20 hours a week than students from low to middle income families. Graphs of the data are also presented. (JPB)

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INDICATOR OF THE MONTH

April 1996

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

Working while in college

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NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

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Working while in college

Working while enrolled in college can be both beneficial and detrimental to a student's academic and labor market success. Although working during the school year leaves less time for students to concentrate on their studies or to participate in extracurricular activities, students may learn things from work experience that are not taught in the classroom. While some studies show that working long hours while in college may reduce a student's likelihood of completing college or lengthen the time it takes for those who do complete it, some employment may increase expected postgraduation wages.

- **Almost half (46 percent) of all 16-to-24-year-old full-time college students were employed in October 1993, and about one-fourth worked at least 20 hours per week. In addition, approximately 85 percent of 16-to-24-year-old part-time college students were employed, with 75 percent working at least 20 hours per week.**
- **The percentage of 16-to-24-year-old full-time college students who were employed rose from 34 percent in 1970 to 47 percent in 1988, and since has remained fairly stable.**
- **White 16-to-24-year-old full-time college students are more likely to be employed than their black counterparts.**
- **Full-time college students, aged 16 to 24, from high income families were less likely to be employed than full-time college students from low or middle income families, and were also less likely to work at least 20 hours per week.**

Percentage of 16- to 24-year-old full-time college students who are employed in October, by race/ethnicity and hours worked per week: 1970–93

	All students			White			Black			Hispanic		
October	Total*	20 or more hours	35 or more hours	Total*	20 or more hours	35 or more hours	Total*	20 or more hours	35 or more hours	Total*	20 or more hours	35 or more hours
1970	33.8	14.1	3.7	34.9	14.7	3.9	21.2	8.0	1.8	—	—	—
1971	34.1	14.8	3.7	35.8	15.6	3.8	16.9	6.1	2.5	—	—	—
1972	35.1	15.0	3.4	36.3	15.2	3.2	21.5	12.2	5.8	42.7	21.0	2.5
1973	36.4	16.8	4.4	37.6	17.4	4.3	27.7	14.2	5.8	34.8	13.8	3.3
1974	36.6	17.0	4.7	38.2	17.4	4.7	23.2	13.0	5.0	34.4	15.8	6.8
1975	35.2	16.6	4.6	36.3	17.0	4.6	23.8	13.0	4.7	39.0	17.5	4.5
1976	37.5	16.9	4.0	39.6	17.7	3.9	22.7	11.9	4.7	35.4	14.8	3.1
1977	38.8	18.1	4.2	40.9	18.9	4.0	20.8	10.5	5.3	42.9	23.5	4.6
1978	39.9	19.0	4.7	41.8	19.7	4.7	22.2	11.7	4.7	53.2	26.8	7.4
1979	38.1	18.0	4.0	40.0	18.4	3.9	24.8	13.9	5.4	35.6	20.4	5.2
1980	40.0	17.9	3.8	42.1	18.3	3.8	24.0	12.2	5.1	41.4	26.6	4.5
1981	39.3	18.7	4.2	41.6	19.5	4.1	23.8	11.7	3.8	39.2	21.9	5.9
1982	39.9	18.5	3.1	42.4	19.6	3.0	26.2	12.2	4.3	33.1	14.1	1.6
1983	40.4	18.8	3.8	42.7	19.3	4.0	28.5	16.0	2.2	33.7	20.2	5.6
1984	42.1	21.0	4.2	44.7	22.0	4.3	25.2	14.8	3.2	34.8	19.7	4.1
1985	44.2	21.5	4.3	47.4	22.6	4.4	24.1	16.0	4.9	43.5	23.2	3.5
1986	43.0	21.9	4.3	46.3	23.5	4.7	24.7	14.2	3.9	40.5	22.6	2.1
1987	44.2	22.3	4.3	45.7	22.8	4.0	31.7	15.8	4.3	52.1	31.8	7.6
1988	46.5	24.5	4.7	48.9	25.1	5.0	31.8	18.6	3.3	40.9	28.7	6.7
1989	46.5	25.2	5.4	48.8	25.6	5.6	29.3	18.5	4.3	49.6	33.8	6.0
1990	45.7	24.1	4.8	48.6	25.1	5.2	29.8	17.1	2.8	45.7	28.0	6.7
1991	47.2	25.4	5.6	49.6	26.5	6.0	31.7	19.1	3.4	54.2	30.6	4.3
1992	47.2	25.8	5.5	50.5	27.2	5.9	30.2	19.9	4.4	47.0	29.4	4.7
1993	46.3	24.6	5.1	50.1	26.5	5.5	28.9	18.0	3.8	46.7	25.1	6.3

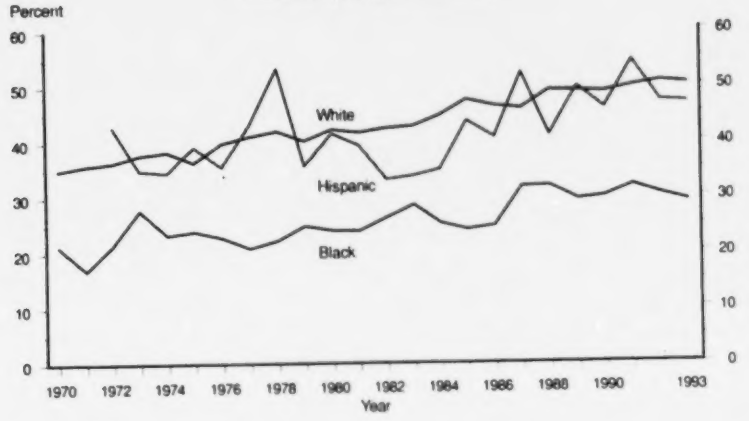
— Not available.

* Includes those with a job but not at work during the survey week.

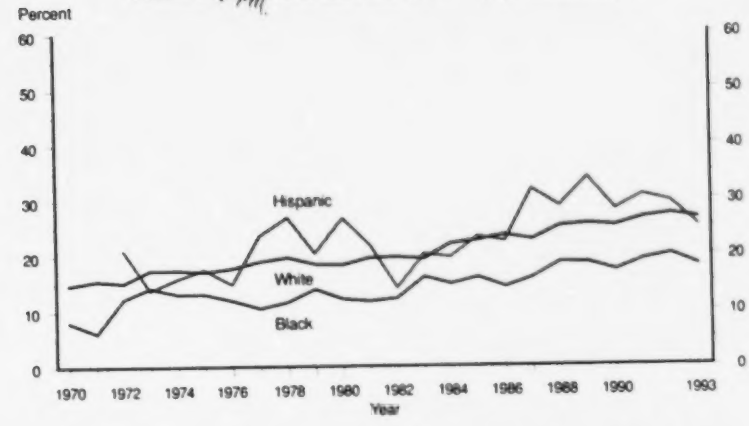
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

Percentage of 16- to 24-year-old full-time college students who were employed in October: 1970–93

Total employed, by race/ethnicity



Percent employed 20 or more hours per week, by race/ethnicity



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

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